



Map Out a Solution

Having plenty of drains, pipes and swales won't automatically solve your problems. That's because a good home drainage system is more than the sum of its parts. Make sure that your system works well by carefully sizing, installing and maintaining all of its elements. Any signs of drainage problems may hamper the sale of your home, so the work that you do now will more than pay for itself later.

First, take a look at the conditions that are affecting your home and property. Where does the water that drains to your lot come from? On what parts of your property does it collect? Then where does it go? How much of your property is covered by impervious surfaces? The answers to these questions will help you determine what steps should be taken to solve your home drainage problems.

Taking a good look means making a map of your property.

To create your map, take your house location survey, which is often available from the City or perhaps from your title company, and trace or photocopy it onto white paper. Check with the Building Department, which may already have plans of your house's roof and foundation drains on file. The Public Works Department may also have plans of the City's storm drain system, which you can use to determine how your system drains and to plan for new installations of pipe. Pencil this information onto your copy of the house location survey.

Now add more information—the location of all buried storm drainage pipes, their approximate depth, size (diameter) and type (plastic, corrugated metal, etc.). Include the dimensions to known surface points, such as the corner of your house or the tree in your backyard. And indicate any landscape features that might affect the way water flows or collects on your property.

Even if you come up empty-handed at the Public Works or Building departments, there's still plenty to do. You can peer into street catch basins to determine where your pipes tie in.

Or simply run a hose into your downspouts and watch where the water drains out. Don't forget to talk with your neighbors, who may have found the answers to many of the same drainage questions already.

Now compare your map with the problem areas you identified at the start of your project. You should be able to see where new drainage elements are needed, old elements need to be replaced or repaired, or the slope and other features of the land altered to help water drain and flow.

Use Your Drainage Map To:

- ▶ Locate drainage system elements for maintenance or future system expansion.
- ▶ Help prevent the weight of parked mobile homes, delivery trucks, or construction equipment from damaging your existing drainage system elements.
- ▶ Avoid damaging drainage system elements during repair or construction of pools or installation of onsite sewage disposal systems and power lines.
- ▶ Plan for landscaping.